

**Remarks of DOR Commissioner Navjeet K. Bal on February 25, 2009 presentation of new Ten Most Wanted for Failure to Pay Child Support poster**

- Thank you all for coming. I'm Navjeet Bal, Commissioner of the Department of Revenue.
- I also want to welcome the custodial parents attending this event, and staff from Child Support Enforcement who work extremely hard every day to make sure that children in the Commonwealth get the support they need and deserve from their parents.
- Today we unveil the most recent poster of the "Ten Most Wanted" for failure to pay child support.
- The message in this poster is simple and direct: There is no responsibility greater than providing support for your children.
- This message has reached the thousands of non-custodial parents who do the right thing in supporting their children, and who would do so with or without this campaign.
- I'd like to hope that someday we'll run out of candidates for this poster, but the reality is we're not there yet.
- I'd also like to think that someday we won't have children wondering why their absent parent has abandoned them, because behind each of the 10 faces are the images of children looking for a missing parent. They're looking for emotional support as well as financial support.
- Looking for a birthday card, a Holiday present, or a congratulatory note or phone call on a graduation, recital or making an honor roll.
- Looking for a connection ... the kind of connection that many of us take for granted ... from a parent who is not in the home, but who is nonetheless present in their life.

- The custodial parents who take on the job of raising their children deserve our thanks and admiration, and I thank those who are here today.
- It takes determination, courage and hard work to do a job meant for two parents, and to fill the emotional and financial gaps an absent parent creates.
- When a non-custodial parent fails to live up to their responsibilities, the state, through the Department of Revenue's Child Support Enforcement Division, is there to help. But the real load is on you, the custodial parents.
- The 10 faces on this poster represent individuals who have willfully evaded their responsibilities to their children and who have hid their identities and wallets.
- They represent those who have abandoned their offspring and who have no apparent intention of meeting their legal obligation to pay child support.
- They have left an incredible burden for custodial parents to bear, and they have left a hole in the hearts of their children.
- The 10 people on the new poster owe \$733,481.
- Over the years these posters produced by the Department of Revenue's Division of Child Support have proven to be an effective tool in focusing public attention on the issue of parental responsibility.
- Since 1992, of the 122 faces appearing on the posters, 104 have been located and about \$4.5 million in unpaid child support collected.
- I have no doubt these posters have also prompted some not on the poster to pay up and not fall behind.
- We intend to send a strong message that this kind of behavior is irresponsible and has serious legal consequences.

- We encourage anyone who knows anything about the whereabouts of these 10 to call the toll-free tip line at 1-888-926-8337.
- The people on this poster all have left the Commonwealth and face criminal charges carrying prison sentences or fines or both. Arrest warrants have been issued and the names of each entered in the National Criminal Information Center database.
- The previous poster, issued in September 2007, resulted in the location of seven delinquent parents and the collection of \$123,000. Of the three unaccounted for, two are known to be living overseas and out of the current reach of child support enforcement authorities.
- In addition to this poster, there are tools DOR employs daily to maximize child support collections and to make it harder for non-custodial parents to escape their responsibilities.
- One of the most successful programs in recent years has been the suspension of professional licenses, as well as drivers' licenses, for those who are not paying. More than \$160 million has been collected in this way since 2003.
- DOR also uses an extensive array of data matches on everything from new hires to insurance settlements to put in place wage assignments or liens.
- Finally, I want to reiterate an earlier point – there are thousands of non-custodial parents in this Commonwealth who do the right thing every day by their children. They love them, support them, nurture them and remain an integral part of their lives.
- They are not the faces we see on this poster.
- Now, before we take questions, I would like to introduce Mary Likins, a custodial parent who has agreed to participate in this poster campaign. Mary .....

